

STEERING, LEGISLATIVE & GOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE

March 7, 2016

5:30 p.m.

Courthouse

MINUTES:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Commissioner Paul Johnson  
Commissioner Allen McAdoo  
Commissioner Robert Peay  
Commissioner Jeff Phillips  
Commissioner Robert Stevens  
Commissioner Trey Gooch, C

OTHERS PRESENT:

Ernest Burgess      Lisa Nolen  
Sonya Stephenson    Barry Tidwell  
John Barbee          Rob Mitchell  
Becky Shelton

Chairman Gooch presided and called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with six members being present at that time.

MINUTES:

"Commissioner Phillips moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to approve the minutes of the last meeting as mailed. This motion passed unanimously by acclamation."

ANNOUNCE FOUR VACANCIES AND ONE ALTERNATE VACANCY ON EQUALIZATION BOARD:

Chairman Gooch advised the positions of Tim Rudd, John Barbee, Delia Goodman, James O. Baker and alternate Joe Phillips on the Equalization Board were expiring and accordingly being announced.

HUMAN RESOURCES 2016/17 BUDGET:

HR Director Sonya Stephenson presented her proposed 2016/17 budget for consideration advising it is \$34,000 less than last year's budget if you do not take into consideration the increased amount for testing and is otherwise \$9,400 less taking the testing into consideration. The Committee asked if there was anything Ms. Stephenson would wish for and she advised her part-time position to be full-time. The department has had interns from MTSU, Motlow, etc. in the past and she has employed some of the interns in the part-time position over the years.

"Commissioner Phillips moved, seconded by Commissioner Peay, to approve the Human Resources budget as presented and forward the same to the Budget Committee. This motion passed unanimously by acclamation."

RESOLUTION TO REQUEST PRIVATE ACT FOR ADDITIONAL GENERAL SESSIONS JUDGE:

Mayor Burgess advised the request for a fourth General Sessions Judge was presented to the Public Safety Committee and sent to Steering. If approved by the Legislature it will require a 2/3 vote by the Commission.

Judge Tidwell provided a compilation of information on the judge ratios in the ten most populous counties to population and filings per judge. The Committee was also provided information on trooper tickets, new criminal warrants, Trustpoint and VA committals. The Committee was advised of savings to the County to offset the cost of the new judge such as transport costs as the judge will be housed primarily at the jail until the new Judicial Building is completed. Mayor Burgess advised currently the judges go to the jail twice a week and there is adequate space at the jail. Judge Tidwell advised the policies and procedures for the pre-trial release program are almost ready and should be done by the time the new judge is in place. Mayor Burgess advised potentially a Senior Judge could get the pre-trial release process refined. It is anticipated the judge will also hold a

Mental Health Court to handle some of the inmates as well as the pre-trial release program. Commissioner Peay questioned the information provided and Williamson County having only two judges. Judge Tidwell advised they have less cases filed.

Mayor Burgess advised with the new judge's position a law clerk/court officer, administrative assistant/Judicial Commissioner, Assistant District Attorney and Assistant Public Defender will be needed and the approximate cost will be \$464,500 per year. Without Rutherford County providing the ADA and APD the Private Act will not be looked at in the Legislature. Sumner County recently had to do the ADA and ADP as well.

Mayor Burgess advised without the pre-trial release program and Mental Health Court the County will have to add on to the jail and this request is pro-active against jail expansion. There were 450 inmates today not sentenced in the jail so potentially up to 100 could reasonably be considered for pre-trial release. Davidson County only has 200 to 300 more inmates in its jail but it has an excellent pre-trial release program. Commissioner McAdoo advised Davidson County also has a good mental health program as well.

Commissioner Phillips advised he has heard choking projections from the School Board but at some point the County has to deal with the cost of being a growing county and try to keep up with the population.

Mayor Burgess advised he supported the fourth General Sessions Judge position and thinks it will prevent and slow down the cost of incarceration.

"Commissioner Phillips moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to approve a Private Act for the fourth General Sessions Judge with support personnel and Assistant District Attorney and Assistant Public Defender like the Public Safety Committee and approve the Resolution creating the Private Act. This motion passed unanimously by acclamation."

There appearing to be no further business to come before the Committee, Chairman Gooch declared the meeting adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

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TREY GOOCH, Chairman